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[REDACTED]

A FUNERAL
SERMON

For the late

JOHN JACOB, Esq;

[REDACTED]

А ЛИНЕЯЛ

БЕРМОИ

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БАНКЕР

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A FUNERAL SERMON

For the late

JOHN JACOB, Esq;

WHO

Died *December 27, 1737.* in his
Return from *Bath.*

PREACHED at

HACKNEY, January 8,

By JOHN BARKER.

Published at the Desire of his EXECUTOR,
and others.

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134.

A FUNERAL

MEMORIAL

1720

John Jacob Hilt



John Jacob Hilt

John Jacob Hilt

J O B vii. 1. former clause.

*Is there not an appointed time to man
upon earth? ---*

MR. **JACOB**, of whose death I am desir'd to take this publick notice, had a very grand, as well as firm and unshaken belief of the purposes, appointments, and disposals of God; and I have chosen the passage of scripture above with some view to his judgment, who in the whole course of his life, from first to last, acquiesced in God's appointment; both silenc'd and satisfy'd himself in the infinite propriety of the divine conduct, and applying himself to his own duty, calmly and comfortably resolved all that befel him into the sovereignty, justice, wisdom, faithfulness, and goodness of God.

The words of my text were spoken by one so eminent for his integrity and trials, his afflictions and patience, that they are record'd by the Holy Ghost for the use and benefit of all succeeding ages and generations of men. **Job** being a person of character and station, and being suddenly reduc'd by providence from a high prosperity to very deep adversity,

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was soon after visited by some friends of his
who were likewise persons of wisdom and of
figure, who made an appointment to come
to him to mourn with him and to comfort him
on this sad occasion^a. The loss of his estate,
children, and health, touch'd this good man
to the quick, and the reflections of his friends
ruffled his spirit; *He opened his mouth after*
some days silence and distress *and cursed his*
day; they reply to him improperly and un-
kindly, and going on mistaken suppositions,
instead of mitigating his sorrows added to
their weight, and accus'd him of sin when
they should have comforted him under affli-
ction. The preceding chapter is his answer
to one of them, in which he labours to shew,
that he had great reason to complain, briskly
reproves him for his rash and uncharitable cen-
sures, and passionately wishes to die. *O that*
I might have my request, and that God would
grant me the thing that I long for? Even that
it would please God to destroy me, that he
would let loose his hand and cut me off^b. This
discourse is carried on in this chapter where
Job gives too much vent to passions he had
hitherto bridled, bitterly complains of his
afflictions as heavy and intolerable, and la-
bours to excuse an inordinate desire of death.
But he only labours to excuse what he could
not well justify; so far as he was impatient
he departed from that true greatness of mind

^a Chap. i. 11.

^b Chap. vii. 8, 9.

he had hitherto discovered, and did not pay that duty to his maker which he owed him. Inordinate desire of life or death is criminal; the greatest affluence of outward good cannot justify the one, nor the heaviest affliction excuse the other; we are the creatures of God who may doubtless do what he will with his own. Submission is our duty, and restless complaint our weakness and shame. Besides, man is a sinner; *What is man, that he should be clean? And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?*^c Now affliction is the punishment of sin. Moral evil as naturally produces penal evil as a corrupt tree brings forth corrupt fruit, or an impure fountain sends forth polluted streams. They who sow iniquity may expect to reap the fruit of it. All the ease and health we enjoy, and all the diseases and adversity we escape in this world of sin and misery, is owing to God's forbearance, and therefore all men as well as Job should labour to impress their hearts with that just and serious expostulation, *Wherfore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?*^d

The text being put by way of question does but more strongly affirm the truth it declares, q. d. "Is there not an appointed time for man upon earth? Yes, there is; I am very sure of it; God himself most certainly knows it, and you who bear so very

^c Chap. xv. 14.

^d Lam. iii. 39.

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“ hard upon your afflicted friend have no
“ reason to disbelieve it ; why therefore
“ should you so severely reprove me for wish-
“ ing my time of trial over ? And so cruelly
“ censure me for earnestly desiring the accom-
“ plishment of my warfare ? Does not a ser-
“ vant earnestly desire the shadow, and an hire-
“ ling look for the reward of his work ? I
“ with much more reason desire death as my
“ release from labour and sorrow ; and God
“ knows, my miserable days and wearisome
“ nights, my loathsome flesh and broken
“ skin, the pains of my body, and the an-
“ guish of my mind, make death more de-
“ sirable to me than light is to them who
“ watch for the morning, or the darkness of
“ night to them who are tired with labour.”

“ Or thus, I do indeed passionately wish,
“ and very much long and desire to die ; and
“ who that endures such acute and compli-
“ cated misery can do otherwise ? but mi-
“ stake me not, as if I imagined the time ap-
“ pointed by the great God could be antici-
“ pated ; I know it can’t ; I don’t indulge so
“ vain an imagination ; but yet pressing grief
“ will have vent, and if mine were weighed
“ it would be heavier than the sand of the sea ;
“ for the arrows of the almighty are within
“ me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spi-
“ rits. Sorrows like mine therefore will fill
“ the heart with bitterness, and perhaps

2 Ver. 2. and following.

book

¶ break

" break out into expressions not quite so admirable; but to him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend¹; you should bear with my complaints, and not oblige me to swallow up my words², if you either will not, or cannot help me."

That I may come more directly to the point I have in view I will enquire a little more particularly,

I. How this proposition may be understood?

II. On what grounds the truth of it relies?

III. And how it may be safely and usefully applied?

I. How may this proposition be understood? It must, I think, be understood to affirm and establish this truth, That God appoints the time of every man's coming into, and continuance in the present world; that the events which befall him, whether prosperous or adverse, are under a divine direction, and that he who is the Creator and Lord of man has a particular care about his life; that the world and its events ever were and will be inspected and conducted by him that made it; the lives of its most considerable inhabitants a principal part of his care; and that to suppose God's existence and perfection, to suppose him all-seeing and righteous,

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and yet to exclude him from any interest and concern in his own world, under a pretence that this is inconsistent with his felicity and tranquility, is unreasonable and absurd. Such a man as *Job* must, one should think, well understand the propriety and fitness of an omniscient, all-wise, and infinitely powerful and merciful Creator's preserving and governing his creatures, and guarding and guiding their lives and actions. That the continuance of all men in this world is God's appointment; and the lives of all good men his special and peculiar care: And by putting the proposition under present consideration in the way of question, he affirms this strongly, and, as it were, derides as well as denies the contrary supposition of a blind *fate*, or capricious *fortune*, having any thing to do with God's world, and especially with the reasonable and immortal part of his creation. It seems very plain, that thus much is fairly imported in this text, and that *Job*, who was a man of great wisdom, and obtained from his Maker a very excellent character, does here expressly and undoubtedly assert the doctrine of *providence*, especially with reference to the life of man. And it should seem, that with an ordinary degree of understanding it might be justly concluded, that the author of our life is the disposer of it, that all men are continued in this world just so long as he sees fit who sent them into it; and that it cannot well be doubted, whether there is such an appoint-

appointment as that supposed in my text, or by whom it is made? But that this doctrine may not be perverted, or so much as misunderstood, I proceed to observe,

That it must not be supposed to deny or discourage the use of appointed means for preserving the life of man, but rather to warrant and require it; forasmuch as it appears that God has settled and established a certain order and connection between causes and effects, or means and ends, and usually accomplishes his purposes without disturbing the order of nature; so that when it is said man's life is continued by God's appointment, it supposes that it should be continued in the way he has prescribed (*viz.*) by daily bread, not by perpetual miracle, in the use of means, not in the neglect of them, and by prudent and reasonable care, not without, much less in opposition to it; and whatsoever may be pretended by some for the sake of cavelling, it is evident that all men in their wits act and practise accordingly. Again,

Unlawful means successfully used to procure untimely, or violent death, opposes not this doctrine; nor does it at all weaken its force, forasmuch as the purpose of God destroys not the liberty of man, necessitates no one's evil action or wicked intention, nor does it or can it oblige the Almighty forcibly to hinder men from usurping a forbidden power over their own lives, or those of others; it is sufficient that they know *what is good,*

and

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and what the Lord requires of them ; that they know by reason and revelation that they should not kill ; that every man is obliged to use all lawful means for preserving his own life, and the life of others ; and that all murderers are accountable to God, themselves, and others, for their unjust and cruel behaviour. But still, God's purpose effectually secures his own end ; his will lies not at the mercy of his creatures ; his appointment is not to be frustrated by a finite power ; infinite foresight and reflection will infallibly and for ever secure God from disappointment in all possible cases ; and it is most certain that he can, and will, and does, as, and when he pleases, over-rule the actions and purposes of free agents without destroying their liberty. If the greatest scripture authority may be allowed to determine this point, it is settled at once both by our Saviour and his Apostle. *Pilate*, in the trial of *Jesus Christ*, to magnify his own authority, and reflect on the silence of our Lord, says, *Knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee ?* *Jesus answered*, *Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above^h.* In which our Lord reminds this magistrate that his power was both limited and controllable ; that God is the fountain of power, and the powers that be are derived from, ordained

^h John xix. 10, 11.

by, and subject to him ; and as they never ought to go any further than his law directs, so they never *can* go any further than his providence permits them. *Pilate*, persuaded of the innocence of *Jesus Christ*, laboured to discharge him, but out of interest and fear at length condemns him : And the apostle *Peter* afterwards, in the review of this transaction, which was a mighty event, and had great consequences, considers it both as *God's* act and that of the *Jews*, making no doubt but they acted herein *freely* and *wickedly*, while yet they were fulfilling the *determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*. *Ye men of Israel* bear these words ; *Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your selves also know : Him, being delivered, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*¹.

Again,

It is very wrong to use this doctrine as an excuse for impatience under affliction, or to cast it as a reflection upon God, that he has appointed men their time on earth, and made it necessary that they should suffer for such a space, and won't let them die and be at rest ; forasmuch as all men are sinners, and suffer only the fruit and punishment of sin, whatever pains and miseries we endure they

¹ *Acts ii. 22, 23.*

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are all deserved ; whatever evil we fear or feel it is but the effect of our own guilt ; we do but reap what we have sowed ; and this is a full answer to all exclamation and impatience, and should put a final end to murmuring and discontent. Will any man say, that God has wronged him, or owes him ought ? That he is innocent or perfect ? That he suffers unjustly, or more than his iniquities have deserved ? If not, he should be silent and submissive, lay his hand on his heart, and suffer not an open rebellion, or a secret murmur against the conduct of providence to arise there. Besides, all afflicted good men will be suitably supported ; if they are humble, patient sufferers, God will assist them under their trials, and in a little time certainly and amply reward them ; and whatever their character be, they have a mixture of good with their evil, some prosperous events, and cheerful days, and smiling providences, on account of which it is but reasonable and grateful to say, *Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil ?*

Finally, Should any abuse this doctrine, by saying, our time being appointed, and not in our power to increase or shorten, we may fill it up as we list, giving way to every wanton and furious inclination, and live at all adventures, without reflection and restraint, this will soon appear so dishonourable to human nature, and so great a discredit to the reason

reason and discretion of sober men, as well as offensive to God, and disrespectful to his laws, that it deserves no other particular confutation.

The sense of this proposition being now sufficiently settled, I proceed to shew,

II. The grounds on which the truth of it relies. And they are,

1. The being and perfections of God. The knowledge and power of God makes it both possible and easy for him to preserve and govern the world; and his wisdom and righteousness lead us to conclude, that he will not, and cannot leave its affairs and events to chance and uncertainty. A general and particular providence may be fairly inferr'd from the infinite perfections of God; and one would think natural reason, left to its free use, would perceive it to be an idle thing to talk of this as an incumbrance on such a powerful and perfect being; nor can it well be suppos'd, that God created the world, without concluding, that he rules and governs it. This carries in the very face of it a dishonourable imputation, and therefore *Aristotle*, the great oracle of pagan philosophy, being greatly puzzled about the doctrine of providence, at length deny'd it; but then foreseeing the difficulties just mentioned he denied the world's creation also, and concluded, that it existed from all eternity.

2. The difficulties on the contrary supposition are insuperably great, and everlastinglly puzzling, and the consequences are terrible to reason, as well as destructive of all religion. He who supposes the world and its affairs to be without divine direction and government, and that the several parts of the creation, and the events of time, are not objects about which providence is employed, will find himself greatly embarrassed upon many occasions; and he who supposes the life of man to be no particular part of God's care, will find it very hard to give any reasonable and satisfactory account how it began, or how it is continued in the midst of so many accidents, diseases, and disasters, to which it is evidently and continually exposed. Sure I am, it is much the wisest and the safest way; the most reasonable and the most dutiful to Almighty God, to suppose and believe, that *his kingdom ruleth over all, and that in him we live, and move, and have our being.* And this leads me to add,

3. That the word of God settles this point upon a firm and immoveable foundation: It strongly asserts the doctrine of providence; informs us how and by whom it is administer'd; who, and what are the objects, and the instruments of it, and sets it out in a most beautiful and infinite variety of parts and passages, and a vast and boundless extent. The scripture opens an amazing scene of this kind to serious and inquisitive minds, and invites

vites our search, and rewards our inquiry with the highest pleasure, and the truest advantage; here we read, not only, *That God upholdeth all things by the word of his power; that by him they all consist; that he is Lord of all; and, who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?* But we find the whole revelation to be an entertaining account of the proof, description, and history of providence, and designed to lead us into sentiments and practices suitable to the perfections of God employed herein; and it points out to us the very particular regard which providence has to the life of man, directing us on this supposition to faith, patience, trust, and particular prayer, and forbidding carefulness, discontent, sloth, immoderate sorrow, and such like things, as are evidently the weakness and reproach of our nature. *Moses* setting forth the providence of God, says, *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations*^k (i. e.) preserved our lives, and been our refuge and shelter in all our wandring and unsettled condition. The devout psalmist calls God, in a way of trust and appeal, *the God of his life^l, and the strength of his life^m*; and frequently commits it to him to be preserved in danger, and to be rescued from destruction; and thus he tells us, that *with God is the fountain of life; that God prolongeth life; that he holdeth our soul in life;*

^k Psalm xc. 1.^l Psalm xxvii. 1.^m Psalm xlvi. 8.

that

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that he gave their life over to the pestilence ; and that he who loves and honours him he will deliver ; set him on high, answer him, be with him in trouble, satisfy him with long life, and shew him his salvation. Solomon observes, that *a man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps*ⁿ. The prophet says, with a view to the life and happiness of God's afflicted people, *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*^o, i. e. our life and happiness is neither in our enemies hands nor in our own ; they can't oppress us without the permission of providence, nor we deliver or preserve our selves without its Assistance. Our blessed Saviour teaches his disciples to depend upon providence, and to avoid all restless solicitude, immoderate love of this world, and distracting care about present life, by observing to them, *That man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth*^p ; (i. e.) neither its comfort nor its continuance. That God takes all needful care about the life of man, and about creatures much below him, and things of less consequence, such as the fowls of the air, and even the grass of the field ; and therefore their care was needless, unprofitable and hurtful ; and so far as it was immoderate it was dishonourable to their heavenly Father, and acting as Heathens, who acknowledge

ⁿ Prov. xvi. 9.^o Jer. x. 23.^p Luke xii. 15.

not a divine providence, and know no other life or world but the present. *Take no thought for your life: Is not the life more than meat?* Bebold the fowls of the air, your heavenly Father feedeth them. Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature? Or Age. Therefore take no thought, no imprudent, solicitous thought about the length, happiness, or events of life, for after all these things do the Gentiles; or as saint Luke calls them, *the nations of the world seek, and your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things*^a, (i.e.) your life is his care, and you may be very secure that he will support and defend it. With this view the apostle Paul directs the *Philippians to be careful for nothing*, (i.e.) with a distrustful solicitude, or with any other but a provident care, *but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make you requests known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts*^b, (i.e.) the fruit of this firm and humble dependance upon providence, and application to God by daily prayer, will be calmness and tranquility of mind, and that peace and composure of spirit which adorns the Christian character, and which they who are inordinately fond of worldly things neither know how to value or obtain. St. Peter, to the like purpose, advises Christians to *cast all their care upon God*,

^a Matt. vi. 28. and following.

^b Phil. iv. 6, 7.

for

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for he careth for them¹, (i. e.) whatsoever difficulties occur in the course of life apply yourselves to God with a meek and quiet spirit, in order to remove them, or support you under them. And the apostle *James* reproves those who form projects for traffick and gain without acknowledging, and depending on providence, by setting before them the vast uncertainty of all things future, the many accidents which may disappoint the most likely schemes, and the great frailty of life it self: *Go to now, or see and consider now, ye that say, to day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow; for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away; for that, or whereas, ye ought to say, if the Lord will we shall live and do this or that².* I will close this head by observing, that the scripture informs us, that providence makes the whole creation its charge; it directs the heavens, bounds the sea, presides in the air, commands the winds, balances the clouds, changes the weather, adorns and enriches the earth, and provides safety and food for the birds and beasts; nay, it extends to, comparatively, small affairs, and events of little moment, and therefore must needs guard and support the life of man, which is, in God's account,

¹ 1 Pet. v. 7.

² James iv. 3, 14, 15.

much more considerable: With this reference our Saviour observes, that *sparrows*, which are so inconsiderable, as that two of them are sold for a *farthing*, or the tenth part of the *Roman penny*, don't fall to the ground without our *Father*; and the very hairs of the head are all *number'd*, and therefore, fear not them that kill the body^u, q. d. that providence which concerns it self about little things will never be wanting in its care about the life of man.

4. Plain experience, and the evident course of things, proves, that there is an appointed time for men upon earth. They who have most to do with the lives and health of men are often constrained to grant this, when they see the different effect of the same means and medicines on different persons in like circumstances; nor can we live any considerable time in this world without seeing or hearing of remarkable preservation or disappointment, unexpected deliverance or unforeseen destruction, in which the elements, the lower creation, our fellow-creatures, or spirits either good or evil, are the instruments or ministers of providence. See how strongly and elegantly *Solomon* expresses this thought: *I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them*

^u Matt. x. 28, 29, 30.

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all ; for man also knoweth not his time, as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them ^w ; q. d. things which seem casual are really providential ; probable expectations are frequently disappointed ; men well qualified don't always succeed ; considerable things are obtained sometimes by people no way qualified to procure them : There is a secret invisible power which either blesses or blasts us, and which preserves or destroys our life and happiness ; and though man has more knowledge than other creatures, yet as to future events he is ignorant as well as they ; and after all his contrivance and perplexity of mind shall be disappointed ; it may be at last, as the fishes which are caught in an evil net, or the heedless birds in the snare of the fowler.

Lastly, We our selves may perceive this to be a fit and proper appointment, for who should determine the time of life but the Lord of it ? Who continue and conclude it but he who gave it ? By whose order we drew our first breath in this world, by his, in all reason, should we draw our last : No one else hath ability or right to act and appoint here. If it be at all fit that the life of man should be in any hands, it is easy to see whose

^w Eccles. ix. 11, 12.

they

they should be; if in the hands of our friends it would probably be too long; if in our enemies as much too short; and if in our own it would be either rashly thrown away in some fit of disappointment and vexation, or immeasurably prolonged through the fear of our dissolution. Besides, if this were not the case, what would become of good people in this dangerous and troublesome world? How would their lives be secured, or their tranquility maintained? Providence is the grand defence and shelter of the pious and faithful, and firm and unshaken trust and confidence in it their never failing encouragement and support. This belief is a good man's sheet anchor which keeps him steady in adversity, and holds his soul in the storms and dangers of the present life. Thus the pious psalmist, under the reproaches and oppression of his enemies, teaches us the propriety and benefit of believing and confiding in providence. *I have heard the slander of many, fear was on every side, they devised to take away my life, but I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, thou art my God, my times are in thy hands, deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from them that persecute me; make thy face to shine upon thy servant: Save me for thy mercies sake.*^{*}

* Psalm xxxi. 14, 15, 16.

APPLICATION.

1. This subject may lead us prudently to consider our present condition ; we are upon earth (i.e.) we are by God's appointment in a state of service and trial ; we are where providence has ordered us for a while to be, and for a wise purpose and end, not yet in a condition of perfect rest, nor in the regions of darkness and torment, one or other of which is to be our future state ; how fit and necessary is it therefore that we duly consider this, and exercise and employ our selves accordingly. The words may be read, *Is there not an appointed warfare for men upon earth?* And so they intimate, that good people are as soldiers, who are to use themselves to hardship and fatigue, who are not to refuse painful and dangerous marches, nor be backward to face or fight their enemy ; who should be properly equipp'd and inur'd to action, be brave and valiant, and fear nothing but pusillanimity and dishonourable flight.

2. This is a plain reason for diligence and patience in the appointed work and trials of life. Our time being given us for service, and being limitted by providence, and at most but short, should be properly used and well fill'd up, and care should be taken, and inquiry made, whether it will bear our serious, frequent, and impartial reflection. We should not be *lothful in business, but fervent*

vent in spirit, serving the Lord; not inordinately fond of the possessions or pleasures of this world; not set too much upon the gratification of appetite, and indulging the lower and less noble powers of our nature; not cumber'd about many things, but consider that one thing is needful; temperate in the use of those things which God gives us richly and largely to enjoy; using our selves to moderation and avoiding excess, and being so discreet as to see that time and business proceed and be likely to finish together. If our way through this world be smooth and pleasant we should be so much the more cheerful and diligent in the service of God; and if it be rough and troublesome, we should be so much the more patient and brave, forasmuch as our assistances and supports are neither few nor small, and our rewards are sure and near, glorious and immortal. Nothing is more dishonourable and criminal than fretfulness and sloth; nothing more reputable, and highly acceptable to God, than diligence, and patient continuance in well-doing.

3. This may account for that which is oftentimes a difficulty with us (*i.e.*) why some arrive at, and beyond, the ordinary rate of man's life, and others come far short of that measure. Intemperance and indiscretion on one side, and moderation and care on the other, may sometimes afford a sufficient reason for this, but not always; for it so happens, that the less likely to live are

continued to old age, and the more strong and promising cut off before they have lived out half their days. Children of the same parents shall some exceed, others come far short of their measure. People not only of different, but as far as we know, of like constitutions, die, some old, others young; some shatter'd with diseases, others in the fulness of their strength, and all the vigor of nature; nay, people in the same distempers, and with the same assistances and methods of cure, some recover, others drop: Can the sons of art always account for this? Or will they so much as pretend it to be without difficulty? Don't they often mistake when they thought themselves sure? And miscarry where they were confident of success? It is said, and in a qualified sense, very truly, no man lives because he is young, nor dies because he is old. The use of appointed means, and all reasonable prudent care to preserve life, is, no doubt, our duty; and so it is to believe, that the beginning, progress, and period of it is God's appointment; *seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth: And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*^y. Nor is providence without its mysteries in the present case any more than nature, forasmuch as to

^y Acts xvii. 25, 26.

the wise and the unwise, the pious and profane, to him that feareth God, and to him that derideth his providence, the event which happeneth, to all outward appearance, is one and the same; all outward things, life and death, happiness and misery, are indifferently dispensed by providence; *one dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet; his breasts full of milk, and his bones moistened with marrow; another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure*². Pious, useful, and exemplary people, die in the midst of their days and usefulness, and those of a quite contrary character and temper live long and at ease; *They are not in trouble like other men, neither are they plagued like other men*³. This, and all that befalls every man as to his life and death, is, and must be left to the order and appointment of God, *Seeing his (i. e.) man's, all, and every man's, days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass*⁴.

4. This should satisfy us as to the removal of men from this to the other world, and it should silence all complaints with respect either to their character, station, age, or diseases; the time of their departure; the manner of it; and any other circumstance attending it; having done our duty as to advice, means of help, and humble, solicitous,

² Job xxi. 23, 24, 25.

³ Psal. lxxiii. 5.

⁴ Job xiv. 5.

parti-

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particular prayer, we should acquiesce in the appointment and disposal of providence.

Thus did the excellent person of whom I am now to give some account, and whose desirable life so many, with great reason, wished to have been prolonged (if it had pleased God) into many more years of usefulness in this world; for though Mr. Jacob was only a private man, and affected to be so, and was not to be persuaded to assume any publick character in any part of his life, yet he was a private man of uncommon capacity, and far beyond the ordinary measure and attainments of mankind. He had a very clear and comprehensive understanding, and a quick and lively apprehension, soon took in the whole compass of a case, and discovered on many occasions great penetration. With great solidity of judgment he had a singular readiness, clearness, and propriety of expression, which easily conveyed his thoughts, and greatly recommended him to men of busines and of figure. He was observed to see into a difficulty in an instant, and his way out of it almost as soon, and was very happy in contriving a proper expedient, and guarding against a probable inconvenience on all occasions; he knew men as well as things, and enter'd deep into the designs of those he had to do with; and when he judg'd it necessary he spoke and acted under a guard, which was often so secret as not to be perceived, and almost always

ways so strong as not to be broke through; He quickly saw his point in all matters of business, and had surprizing turns by which to come at it, and had a happy way of leading those who differ'd from him, by easy steps, into his sentiments, wisely and genteelly, or else handsomly shewed them their mistake.

He was very happy in a natural calmness and serenity of mind, and by cultivating this lived a great part of his life with a most amiable and exemplary evenness and cheerfulness of temper; great events neither transported nor dejected him; he was neither elated by prosperity nor ruffled by disappointments; he kept the possession of himself, and was hardly ever at a loss in any exigence, either how to act himself or how to advise others.

His acquaintance, I believe, were generally sensible of his great civility and courtesy; he had a soft and fine address, and a most genteel and grateful spirit; and though his superiority to most men was very visible, yet he had a fine condescension and candor, and a great degree of mildness and sweetness of disposition, especially before his constitution was broken by grief and diseases, and the several powers of nature weaken'd by the frequent attacks and returns of distemper. He was a very useful man in the world, and went through a great deal of busines with great probity and honour: He was greatly trusted, and was very discreet and faithful.

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He thought that integrity should run like a golden thread through the several parts and stages of every good man's life ; and that all such people were highly valuable in any station or profession who had an upright view without the evil mixture of sowerness or craft.

For a good number of years he had many and very great affairs upon his hands, and he then used himself to great application and diligence ; but he would sometimes unbend, and in his leisure hours was a very chearful companion, and would entertain his friends with pleasant discourse, many instructive passages, and sometimes surprizing turns of wit.

He lay under very few obligations to others, but was remarkably bountiful and charitable. His great benevolence made him the common refuge of the distressed both for counsel and relief ; his heart and his purse being open to objects of misery without distinction. He did a vast deal of good, and he did it in a most becoming manner, which render'd his friendship the common claim of all his acquaintance. I believe his great liberality will well warrant my application of Job's account of his prosperity and honour, to this great friend and lover of mankind : *When the ear heard him it bles'd him, and when the eye saw him it gave witness to him ; he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him ; the bles-*
sing

sing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widows heart to sing for joy: He put on righteousness and it clothed him; his judgment was as a robe and a diadem; (i. e.) his uprightness and compassion were his ornament and honour. He was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, a father to the poor, and the cause he knew not (i. e.) which was difficult to be understood, he searched out; and he brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth; (i. e.) he destroyed the power of the oppressor, and made him restore what he had wrongfully taken away. I ought now to add, that though he was rich in good works he affected secrecy in his charities, and hated ostentation and applause.

He had a great reverence of God and of divine appointments, and was a truly good and religious man, living soberly, righteously, and godly, in the world. His tenderness of spirit made him very receptive of good impressions. He was a lover of God and of good people from his youth; and wickedness in all the branches and appearances of it was his aversion and dread. He judg'd in matters of religion as men of wisdom and experience should, and generally do (i. e.) with temper and moderation; but he had a great apprehension of the excellency of the Christian revelation, and sense of the necessity and im-

Job xxix. 11. and following. *and following.*

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portance of it, and both firmly believed it, and thankfully received it, as a most wise and gracious provision for depraved, guilty, impotent, and miserable creatures; though he was as far as any man from restraining a sober enquiry into matters of revelation, yet he was always against extremes, and had a great dislike of extravagant notions, and peoples indulging in these matters to curiosit and conceit. He thought the Dissenting interest an honest interest, which ought to be owned and supported, and he was accordingly a Protestant Dissenter, and stately attended both at *London* and here in our assemblies, and was for some time past in full communion. But not the Dissenting interest only have a great loss in his abilities and liberality, but all his acquaintance, the world, and the church of God.

I have observed Mr. *Jacob* to give great attention, in the course of his life, to the conduct of providence; he thought he might well do so, forasmuch as he set out in life with no advantage, and was for several years, in the earlier part of it, under great temptation, to have continued with a master who never made any figure in his profession; but by his mother's assistance (of whose wisdom he would often speak, and of his great obligation to her for the care she took of his education) he got out of that service, and after considerable application and diligence for some time, was happily brought, by the divine

vine direction, into the service of those who were eminent in their profession, and quickly discover'd his genius and furniture. Here he rose in a short time into great esteem with persons of understanding and fortune ; and from this period he reckon'd his advancement to commence, which led him to say, in a late discourse concerning this and the other life,

“ As to the future life I firmly believe it,
“ and expect my greatest happiness in it. I
“ know but little of it indeed, but I am
“ very sure, that God who raised me out of
“ obscurity, and took so much care of me in
“ this world, can easily provide for me, and
“ dispose of me happily in the other world,
“ and I hope he will.”

He lived, after he married, with great and growing satisfaction, and with very little sickness, and hardly any death in his family for near thirty years, which he often mentioned with great thankfulness, and as a reason for entire submission, when it pleased God afterwards to visit him with great and heavy affliction ; his mother, both his children, his wife, and his two brothers, all died very soon after one another, and yet he preserved both decency and dignity of mind and behaviour, attended their funerals with a manly and Christian composure ; and I believe no one heard him in all those affecting events so much as utter an unadvised word ; this was the more remarkable, as he was known to be so very tender, affectionate, and exemplary in all the relations of life. His

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His grand-children were apparently, from this time, his great care and delight; they descend from a beloved daughter, whose sad and sudden death, in the prime of her days, and in the fullest happiness, notwithstanding all his firmness and fortitude, reached his heart; and, as he told me, gave, he believed, the first mortal wound to his constitution. It is their happiness to have known their grand-father, whose wise instructions, and great example, young as they are, I hope, they will never forget. It is their great advantage to be now in the hands of parents, of whose prudence and tenderness Mr. Jacob had the greatest opinion and assurance; and this, I am well satisfied, contributed very much to his peace, and comfort, under the apprehensions, and approaches of death.

His gradual declension, for some years past, was very visible, and no body saw it more plainly than himself, but he would not complain, because he hated to give trouble, and knew it was fruitless; he delighted to see his friends cheerful, and strove to make them so; he would often say he feared nothing so much as guilt and pain; was greatly thankful that he was very easy; loved to have his acquaintance about him; always made the best he could of every thing; continued calm and lively almost without interruption, and would often, by some or other smart, and cheerful expression, divert, and put by, the solicitous concern, and inquiries of his friends about the state of his health. That

That he would neglect no means proper for preserving of life, appears from his last fatal journey, which he undertook at the desire of those, who doubtless meant his advantage, but very much against his own inclination, having a strong desire to die at home, amongst those with whom he had lived; but how much he understood that resignation to God, disengagement from this world, and preparation for death, was more his business than mere living, may appear from his own words; in answer to a letter some time ago, wherein his friend had touched upon the desirableness and importance of his life, he writes thus, "I am extreamly
" obliged to you for your prayers, and have
" reason to hope they avail much, especially
" as to what relates to a due preparation for
" a future and better state and world — for
" as to what concerns *this*, it is difficult to
" know what or who to pray for, we being
" apt to think the persons we value to be of
" great consequence, when, perhaps, they
" by staying here, prevent others who would
" make a better use of their stations and
" estates. I am conscious I might have made
" a better use of mine than I have done, but
" how they will act who succeed me I have
" no right to know or determine, therefore
" I will endeavour neither to be too fond of
" keeping my post, nor deserting it."

Providence so ordered it that he died on the road in an inn, of which, however grieved

vous it was to him, he made no complaint; but continued his courteous and respectful behaviour towards the friends who were about him to the last; and died as he lived, with great calmness and reputation, without pain and without fear, firmly trusting in God, and fully satisfied with his appointment. And for my own part, I freely own, I have not heard of any private man who lived more esteemed, and died more lamented, in any place or age.



F I N I S.